



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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news digest

94080D

Bishops release letter on sin of racism, urge reading in parishes on May 15

The bishops of the Episcopal Church have released a Pastoral Letter on the Sin of Racism, adopted at a special meeting of the House of Bishops in March, and urged it be read throughout the church on May 15.

In a covering letter to the bishops signed by co-chairs of the drafting committee, Bishop Edward Lee of Western Michigan and Bishop Arthur Williams, Jr. of Ohio, the bishops are asked to solicit and gather responses to the letter from parishes and individuals that would be shared at a Bible study session at the church's General Convention in August. "In this way, we continue to treat the issue of racism as a social and spiritual condition and not merely as a legislative matter," the letter said.

"The essence of racism is prejudice coupled with power," the letter contends. "It is rooted in the sin of pride and exclusivity" and it "perpetuates a basic untruth which claims the superiority of one group of people over others because of the color of their skin, their cultural history, their tribal affiliation or their ethnic identity." That kind of lie "distorts the biblical understanding of God's action in creation, wherein all human beings are made in the image of God" and it "blasphemes the ministry of Christ who died for all people."

The pastoral asserts that "a new moment of choice is upon us...shaped by a fresh understanding of our baptismal calling...by the persistent and pervasive racism of our day, an evil that clings so closely that it seems to be part of our very flesh." In a determination to "move beyond pious and easy resolutions," the letter proposes specific steps in a covenant, including an acknowledgment that "our mission involves not only changing hearts, but also engaging ourselves in seeking to transform a socio-economic system." The covenant also pledges "a high priority on the development of strategies for the recruitment, deployment and support of persons of color" and the

"development of liturgical expressions that reflect the church's racial and ethnic composition...." A standing committee of the house will "implement and monitor the fulfillment of this covenant." (Page 8)

94081D

Steven Plummer will resume ministry as bishop of Navajoland

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning has announced that Bishop Steven Plummer will resume his ministry as bishop of the Navajoland Area Mission on June 1, 1994, following a year-long leave of absence in the wake of a revelation of sexual misconduct. Plummer began a leave of absence in May, 1993, when a deacon in Navajoland reported that Plummer had confided to him that he had engaged in sexual activity over a two-year period with a male minor in breach of a trust relationship. The activity ended about five years ago.

In an April 14 statement, Browning concluded that Plummer's return to oversight of Navajoland was "a responsible step and is in the best interest of the church." He said that his recommendation was based on "a full and complete evaluation of the needs of Navajoland, the wishes of the people there, and of Bishop Plummer's present circumstances and abilities to carry out this ministry."

As part of his evaluation, Browning consulted with Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire who has served as interim bishop in Navajoland, as well as with congregations in Navajoland during a three-day visit in February. Browning also pointed out that during the leave of absence, Plummer, his spouse and family have participated in a therapeutic treatment program. (Page 10)

94082D

Standing committee members think new funding formula may be implemented gradually

As dioceses across the country react to Executive Council proposals for a radical change in the funding formula of national church program and administration, members of the committee responsible for proposing the change at General Convention feel that dioceses may need time to adjust to the proposals.

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance (PB&F), meeting at the Episcopal Church Center in New York, April 15-17, considered whether refinements are needed in a proposed new funding formula. Some members contended that dioceses which face increased askings will need time to "step up" in gradual stages to their new level of support for the national budget.

Although they have received a number of protests from Episcopalians who are angry about the loss of some programs and ministries as a result of the proposed budget, members of PB&F took no action to amend or change Executive Council's budget proposals based on its priorities. Instead, it will wait until it receives resolutions and submissions at hearings in Provinces and at General Convention before considering changes. (Page 12)

94083D

Churches attempt to respond to carnage and chaos in Rwanda

The Episcopal Church has joined other Anglican churches in prayer and relief efforts to help those caught in the civil carnage in war-torn Rwanda. Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning wrote to President Bill Clinton to say that he was "appalled and distressed" over the reports of carnage and he implored Clinton "to use all your influence at the United Nations to organize an effective multilateral peace effort to stop the killing and restore order."

Browning also wrote to Archbishop Augustin Nshamihigo of the Episcopal Church in Rwanda (*L'Eglise Episcopale du Rwanda*) to express deep concern for "how this crisis is affecting the life of the church and, indeed, the very lives and safety of you and your people." He told the primate that the Episcopal Church's Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief had sent an emergency grant of \$25,000 to the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund of the Anglican Church in Canada which is coordinating the Anglican Communion's relief efforts.

Eyewitness accounts by those escaping the carnage paint a gruesome portrait of a society gone mad. Thousands of corpses lie untended in the streets of the capital city of Kigali and any semblance of public order has evaporated. While the original violence was directed by Hutus against the Tutsi minority, others now suggest that the killings go beyond what the Western media likes to characterize as "ethnic violence." Initiated by the Presidential Guard in reaction to the death of Rwanda's president in a

suspicious plane crash, the violence has spread to the regular army and gangs of heavily armed youth, according to reports from the All Africa Council of Churches. (Page 13)

94084D

Former students at Nashotah House face charges of sexual abuse

After a two-month investigation, police in a Milwaukee suburb have arrested a former student at Nashotah House, a seminary of the Episcopal Church, and implicated four others in allegations of sexual abuse of minors on the campus in the late 1980s. According to news reports in the *Milwaukee Journal*, the Rev. Eugene Maxey, who is canonically resident in the Diocese of Albany, was arrested and charged in Waukesha County Circuit Court with seven counts of second-degree sexual assault of three teenaged boys. The allegations were first made by the son of a graduate of the seminary and involve four other men, three of them former students at Nashotah House.

The allegations were reported to seminary officials in February, according to a statement released April 12 by the office of Dean Gary Kriss. Seminary officials met with Waukesha County District Attorney Paul Bucher and cooperated in the launch of an investigation. The seminary did not reveal the allegations "in order to allow the investigation by appropriate authorities to go forward unimpeded," according to the statement.

"The primary aim of Nashotah House in responding to these allegations is to assist victims of sexual abuse and the members of their families in the process of healing. The dean and trustees also wish to ensure that perpetrators of sexual abuse are identified so that their abusive behavior can be stopped and in the hope that they can receive appropriate help," the statement added. According to newspaper accounts, investigators have confirmed that Maxey faced similar allegations of sexual abuse in the Diocese of Ft. Worth (Texas) but diocesan officials did not share those allegations with either the seminary or the Diocese of Albany where Maxey later sought ordination. (Page 15)

94085D

Anglicans in Wales vote against ordaining women to the priesthood

In a move that stunned many observers, the Governing Body (GB) of the Anglican Church in Wales rejected legislation on April 6 that would have permitted the ordination of women to the priesthood. The proposed legislation failed by seven votes to meet the required two-thirds margin in the House of Clergy. The other two houses--bishops and laity--approved the measure by the required two-thirds vote.

At the announcement of the vote a loud gasp of despair emanated from the assembly, followed by some crying and then silence. Women deacons sought the solace of each other and their supporters. Nevertheless, there were no demonstrations or outbursts of any kind on the floor.

Following the announcement, Archbishop Alwyn Rice Jones, primate of the Anglican Church in Wales, said that he was "ashamed" of the church in Wales and expressed hope that the rejection of the bill would not drive out women from the church's ministry. He pledged that the Bench of Bishops would bring the bill back to the Governing Body within 12 months, but the process would likely take another three years before it could be voted on again. (Page 16)

94086D

Browning condemns attack in Afula, urges Palestinians and Israelis to press for peace

Consistent with his condemnation of the massacre of Muslims in the Hebron Mosque, Browning issued a strong rebuke of the April 6 attack on Israelis at a bus stop in Afula. "I condemn, completely, the fanatical attack on innocent people at a bus stop in Afula...and I am deeply saddened at the pain of the families who lost relatives in this senseless act. Revenge serves no good purpose," Browning said in an April 8 statement.

"The sooner the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza ends, the sooner Palestinians can move towards sovereignty and Israel towards peace and security," Browning insisted. "The peace process cannot be allowed to fail."

At the end of a recent trip to the Middle East, Browning joined his counterpart in the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, President-Bishop Samir Kafity, in a statement on peace and justice in the area.

The bishops reaffirmed a commitment to "support the creation of a sovereign state for a new Palestine while assuring peace and security for Israel."
(Page 18)

94087D

Controversial Roman Catholic theologian will become Episcopal priest

The controversial Roman Catholic theologian and noted author, Matthew Fox, has joined the Episcopal Church and will be recognized as an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of California later this year.

Fox, an ordained Roman Catholic Dominican priest for 27 years, was dismissed from his order in March 1993 by the Vatican. His dismissal marked the end of a decade-long struggle with the Vatican over his controversial views. In 1989, the Vatican's Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith imposed a mandatory year of silence against Fox so that he would not take public positions that it contended were opposed to Roman Catholic teaching.

"I have had occasion to question Matthew Fox concerning his Christology and can easily see that the foundation of his understanding of Jesus Christ is both orthodox and biblical," said Bishop William Swing of the Diocese of California. "What makes him so controversial is that he attempts to translate the central revelation of Christianity in a vocabulary that is not easily recognized in traditional circles and he attempts to be a conduit for allowing a new generation to come to terms with creation and the primary human need to worship God." (Page 19)

94088D

Anglican leaders in Southern Hemisphere call for new mission strategies and self-reliance

Anglican leaders from the Southern Hemisphere have declared that their churches depend too heavily on the "North" and have called for more sharing among churches in the developing world.

"For too long we have been too dependent on funds and other resources from the North to keep our churches going...We wish to commit ourselves to simpler ways of being the church, to learning to live within our means..., " the church leaders said at the meeting in Kanuga.

More than 70 representatives of 23 Anglican provinces from 22 nations in Asia, Africa and South America met to develop strategies for mission in their part of the Anglican Communion. At the end of their meeting, the representatives released a pastoral letter described as "A Trumpet from the South," contending that Christians in the South need to achieve self-reliance, without negating the biblical notion of *koinonia*. (Page 20)

94080

Bishops release letter on sin of racism, urge reading in parishes on May 15

by James Solheim

The bishops of the Episcopal Church have released a Pastoral Letter on the Sin of Racism, adopted at a special meeting of the House of Bishops in March, and urged it be read throughout the church on May 15. (*see full text in Newsfeatures section of ENS.*)

In a covering letter to the bishops signed by co-chairs of the drafting committee, Bishop Edward Lee of Western Michigan and Bishop Arthur Williams, Jr. of Ohio, the bishops are asked to solicit and gather responses to the letter from parishes and individuals that would be shared at a Bible study session at the church's General Convention in August. "In this way, we continue to treat the issue of racism as a social and spiritual condition and not merely as a legislative matter," the letter said.

Among the suggestions emerging from table discussions during the House of Bishops meeting, the committee suggests that bishops indicate their personal commitment to the covenants described in the letter, discuss the letter at diocesan conventions or in special meetings in the diocese, create a committee or task force responsible for implementing the letter or use a personal inventory to expose racist attitudes.

Prejudice coupled with power

"The essence of racism is prejudice coupled with power," the letter contends. "It is rooted in the sin of pride and exclusivity" and it "perpetuates a basic untruth which claims the superiority of one group of people over others because of the color of their skin, their cultural history, their tribal affiliation or their ethnic identity." That kind of lie "distorts the biblical understanding of God's action in creation, wherein all human beings are made in the image of God" and it "blasphemes the ministry of Christ who died for all people."

The pastoral asserts that "a new moment of choice is upon us...shaped by a fresh understanding of our baptismal calling...by the persistent and pervasive racism of our day, an evil that clings so closely that it seems to be part of our very flesh." In a determination to "move beyond pious and easy resolutions," the letter proposes specific steps in a covenant, including an acknowledgment that "our mission involves not only changing hearts, but also engaging ourselves in seeking to transform a socio-economic system." The

covenant also pledges "a high priority on the development of strategies for the recruitment, deployment and support of persons of color" and the "development of liturgical expressions that reflect the church's racial and ethnic composition...." A standing committee of the house will "implement and monitor the fulfillment of this covenant."

"Escalating violence in America illustrates the complexity of racism," the letter says. "At the heart of the matter is fear. We fear those who are different from ourselves, and that fear translates into violence which in turn creates more fear. Institutionalized preference, primarily for white persons, is deeply ingrained in the American way of life...."

It will take more than a pastoral letter on racism to eradicate this sin but "we are hopeful that this step will add to breaking down the barriers that divide us on the basis of racial differences and will be one more way to help us employ our freedom in the maintenance of justice," Lee and Williams said in their letter.

A model for dioceses and parishes

The pastoral letter is part of an emphasis on racism over three triennia in the life of the church, beginning with the controversial decision to hold the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix, despite Arizona's rejection of a holiday to honor Martin Luther King, Jr.

The pastoral letter emerged from intense and highly personal discussions of racism at the regular meeting of the House of Bishops in Panama last September. "We made a conscious attempt to enter into the realities of racism without just giving a document for reaction," said Lee. By "holding our own feet to the fire" in sharing personal experiences in small groups, the committee is hoping to provide a model for dioceses and parishes to address the sin of racism.

94081

Steven Plummer will resume ministry as bishop of Navajoland

by Jeffrey Penn

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning has announced that Bishop Steven Plummer will resume his ministry as bishop of the Navajoland Area Mission on June 1, 1994, following a year-long leave of absence in the wake of a revelation of sexual misconduct.

Plummer began a leave of absence in May, 1993, when a deacon in Navajoland reported that Plummer had confided to him that he had engaged in sexual activity over a two-year period with a male minor in breach of a trust relationship. The activity ended about five years ago.

In an April 14 statement, Browning concluded that Plummer's return to oversight of Navajoland was "a responsible step and is in the best interest of the church." He said that his recommendation was based on "a full and complete evaluation of the needs of Navajoland, the wishes of the people there, and of Bishop Plummer's present circumstances and abilities to carry out this ministry." (*See Newsfeatures section for text of statement.*)

As part of his evaluation, Browning consulted with Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire who has served as interim bishop in Navajoland, as well as with congregations in Navajoland during a three-day visit in February. Browning also pointed out that during the leave of absence, Plummer, his spouse and family have participated in a therapeutic treatment program.

House of Bishops concur

Since Browning shares oversight of the Navajoland Area Mission with the House of Bishops, he presented his recommendation to the March meeting of the House of Bishops at the Kanuga Conference Center in North Carolina. In his presentation to the bishops, Browning reported that "a large majority of the people favored the return of Bishop Plummer as bishop of Navajoland. His ministry to the non-English speaking Navajo, his ministry as a bridge between the Anglican and Navajo cultures and traditions, and his ministry as a pastor with compassion for his people and a deep spirituality were affirmed at each of the area meetings," Browning said. "There was clear recognition of Bishop Plummer as a Navajo leader."

Browning added that "even among those who did not favor his return as bishop, a great love and care for Bishop Plummer were expressed. This love

for Bishop Plummer was the common theme described in all conversations related to his future ministry in the church."

Following Browning's report to the House of Bishops," the house supported my recommendation that Bishop Plummer resume his ministry," Browning said in his April 14 statement.

ECIM will 'pray for healing'

Although Plummer will resume his ministry as bishop of Navajoland, some Indian leaders continue to express mixed emotions about the decision.

"Many of us were deeply disappointed and angry at Bishop Plummer," said Ginny Doctor, chair of the Episcopal Council on Indian Ministries (ECIM), in a telephone interview. "We had a lot of expectations in Bishop Plummer and felt betrayed by him."

In August 1993, the ECIM wrote to Plummer asking him to resign. "We had asked him to resign simply because we didn't think it was appropriate for a holy leader who is alleged to have done child sexual abuse to continue in that ministry," Doctor said. At the same time, the ECIM adopted a resolution deploring sexual misconduct by "any Christian person," adding that "bishops must be held to the same rigid standard of ethical behavior as other clergy."

Doctor said that despite mixed feelings surrounding Bishop Plummer, "the ECIM will continue to pray for healing, not only for Steve Plummer, but for our own Council of Indian Ministries."

Ministry with Navajos is century old

The Episcopal Church's ministry among Navajos is a century old but was not unified until the House of Bishops created the Navajoland Area Mission in 1977. The mission combines, in a unique structure, work among the Navajos in three dioceses--Arizona, Rio Grande and Utah.

At its convocation in 1987, the Navajos asked for a new level of partnership with the Episcopal Church, including the right to nominate their own bishop. The 1988 General Convention endorsed the request and the Navajos elected Plummer in June of 1989. The House of Bishops meeting in Philadelphia that fall ratified the choice, and Plummer was consecrated the first Navajo bishop, and the third Native American bishop, in March of 1990.

94082

Standing committee members think new funding formula may be implemented gradually

by Jerry Hames

As dioceses across the country react to Executive Council proposals for a radical change in the funding formula of national church program and administration, members of the committee responsible for proposing the change at General Convention feel that dioceses may need time to adjust to the proposals.

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance (PB&F), meeting at the Episcopal Church Center in New York, April 15-17, considered whether refinements are needed in a proposed new funding formula. Some members contended that dioceses which face increased askings will need time to "step up" in gradual stages to their new level of support for the national budget.

In order to offset a potentially disastrous shortfall to the national budget, committee members said they may have to consider a "step down" plan, by which the 76 dioceses that will pay less under the proposed formula, would do so progressively over a period of years.

The proposed funding formula for the national church would be based on diocesan income, including unrestricted investment income, instead of parish income. Under the new proposal, national church revenue would be reduced by more than \$7.9 million, a total "asking" of \$28,354,657 in 1995.

Despite the overall reduction in the budget, the proposed formula would mean that 23 dioceses--mostly small dioceses in the West and South--will be faced with increases, some of them substantial.

Representatives of some of these dioceses have already said they would have difficulty meeting the new formula and want a plan by which they could move gradually toward their full asking.

Amendments to budget will wait until General Convention

Although they have received a number of protests from Episcopalians who are angry about the loss of some programs and ministries as a result of the proposed budget, members of PB&F took no action to amend or change Executive Council's budget proposals based on its priorities. Instead, it will wait until it receives resolutions and submissions at hearings in Provinces and at General Convention before considering changes.

PB&F received the first draft of the Budget Handbook that will be distributed in May to all bishops and deputies elected to the 71st General Convention in Indianapolis August 24-September 2. The handbook, based on priorities set by Executive Council after hearings in nearly all dioceses, is the basis upon which the new budget will be set.

Committee members said that they want to avoid a situation like the one at the 1991 convention when, after bishops and deputies approved the budget, many dioceses made cuts in their support to the national church, resulting in the elimination of programs and layoffs of staff in 1991 and 1993.

Treasurer Ellen Cooke reported that the number of national staff will have been reduced from 299 in 1991 to 208 by the time General Convention convenes in Indianapolis.

--Jerry Hames is editor of *Episcopal Life*.

94083

Churches attempt to respond to carnage and chaos in Rwanda

by James Solheim

The Episcopal Church has joined other Anglican churches in prayer and relief efforts to help those caught in the civil carnage and chaos in war-torn Rwanda. Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning wrote to President Bill Clinton to say that he was "appalled and distressed" over the reports of carnage and he implored Clinton "to use all your influence at the United Nations to organize an effective multilateral peace effort to stop the killing and restore order."

Browning also wrote to Archbishop Augustin Nshamihigo of the Episcopal Church in Rwanda (*L'Eglise Episcopale du Rwanda*) to express deep concern for "how this crisis is affecting the life of the church and, indeed, the very lives and safety of you and your people." He told the primate that the Episcopal Church's Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief had sent an emergency grant of \$25,000 to the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund of the Anglican Church in Canada which is coordinating the Anglican Communion's relief efforts.

Gruesome situation requires prayer and advocacy

The Rev. Canon Samuel Van Culin, secretary general of the Anglican Consultative Council in London, wrote to all the primates urging them to join the relief efforts. "The four components of the appeal are prayer, giving, education and advocacy," he said in his April 19 letter. He pointed out that the Canadian church "has already made a substantial donation to Burundi over the past year, in its special relationship with the francophone church" because of Canada's bi-lingual heritage in English and French.

Van Culin and others have put support of refugees near the top of the list of crises. Information from the All Africa Council of Churches (AACC) noted that there were already 375,000 refugees and internally displaced people in Rwanda and United Nations figures place the number of Burundi refugees in neighboring countries at 800,000.

Eyewitness accounts by those escaping the violence paint a gruesome portrait of a society gone mad. Thousands of corpses lie untended in the streets of the capital city of Kigali and any semblance of public order has evaporated. While the original violence was directed by the Hutus at the Tutsi minority, others now suggest that the killings go beyond what the Western media likes to characterize as "ethnic violence." Initiated by the Presidential Guard in reaction to the death of Rwanda's president in a suspicious plane crash, the violence spread to the regular army and gangs of heavily armed youth, according to AACC sources.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town, president of the AACC, wrote to the churches and people of Rwanda expressing his grief over "this terrible time in your lives." He said, "We are bleeding with you and upholding you in our feeble prayers during this crisis." He concluded his April 12 letter, "In our beloved South Africa we know of terror and violence too and simply wish to assure you that the people of Rwanda are with us and we with them."

94084

Former students at Nashotah House face charges of sexual abuse

by James Solheim

After a two-month investigation, police in a Milwaukee suburb have arrested a former student at Nashotah House, a seminary of the Episcopal Church, and implicated four others in allegations of sexual abuse of minors on the campus in the late 1980s.

According to news reports in the *Milwaukee Journal*, the Rev. Eugene Maxey, who is canonically resident in the Diocese of Albany, was arrested and charged in Waukesha County Circuit Court with seven counts of second-degree sexual assault of three teenaged boys. The allegations were first made by the son of a graduate of the seminary and involve four other men, three of them former students at Nashotah House.

The allegations were reported to seminary officials in February, according to a statement released April 12 by the office of Dean Gary Kriss. "Four men who were students at Nashotah House at that time [1987-90] and one occasional visitor to the campus, an ordained priest of the Episcopal Church, were identified as having had sexual contact with at least two minor children on numerous occasions over a period of three years. In some cases, drugs, alcohol and pornography were also alleged to have been involved," the statement said.

Seminary officials met with Waukesha County District Attorney Paul Bucher and supported the launch of an investigation. The seminary did not reveal the allegations "in order to allow the investigation by appropriate authorities to go forward unimpeded," according to the April 12 statement. "The primary aim of Nashotah House in responding to these allegations is to assist victims of sexual abuse and the members of their families in the process of healing. The dean and trustees also wish to ensure that perpetrators of sexual abuse are identified so that their abusive behavior can be stopped and in the hope that they can receive appropriate help," the statement added.

Similar allegations in Texas

According to newspaper accounts, investigators have confirmed that Maxey faced similar allegations of sexual abuse in the Diocese of Ft. Worth (Texas) but diocesan officials did not share those allegations with either the seminary or the Diocese of Albany where Maxey later sought ordination.

Bishop David Ball of Albany released a statement that he "had no knowledge of any sexual conduct on the part of Eugene Maxey while canonically resident in the Diocese of Ft. Worth."

Former Nashotah House dean, the Rev. Jack Knight, confirmed that "some people came to talk to me about suspicions they had of him" and that he spoke to Maxey to tell him of the suspicions. "I told him that he needed to behave differently or get help, if he needed help," Knight told the *Milwaukee Journal*. But he did not notify other church officials or the police because he regarded the allegations as "innuendo and hearsay."

The district attorney's office has said that its investigation should be completed by mid-May and they will make appropriate charges against the other men involved in the case.

In the meantime, Kriss said that the seminary has held open meetings to discuss the issues and in attempts to move ahead as a community.

94085

Anglicans in Wales vote against ordaining women to the priesthood

by James Rosenthal

In a move that stunned many observers, the Governing Body (GB) of the Anglican Church in Wales rejected legislation on April 6 that would have permitted the ordination of women to the priesthood.

The proposed legislation failed by seven votes to meet the required two-thirds margin in the House of Clergy. The other two houses--bishops and laity--approved the measure by the required two-thirds vote.

During the three-hour debate, supporters and opponents of the measure passionately presented many of the arguments that have circulated throughout the church for the past 20 years.

In 1975 the Anglican Church in Wales agreed that there were no theological objections to ordaining women as priests, but did not proceed with legislation at that time. In a poll taken of parishes in the Anglican Church of Wales three years ago, more than 77 percent of the parochial church councils favored ordaining women.

'Don't ignore the laity'

Bishop Ivor Rees of the Diocese of St. David's told the assembly "not to ignore the voice of the laity." He urged an affirmative vote, contending that "we have a right to make this decision. The Anglican Communion is saying something quite definite about the ministry of women." George Fisher, a lay member of the GB from the Diocese of Landlaff, said that he was voting in favor of the legislation "to affirm my Anglicanism." He said that Anglicanism was "born to adapt, be flexible, broad, tolerant and comprehensive."

The Rev. David Hughes Rees of the Diocese of St. Asaph contended that limiting the priesthood to men was "partial, traditional and just plain wrong." He received thunderous applause following his statement that the church should "be ashamed of following the secular world in matters such as the ordination of women. It should have been out in front--the secular world following the church's lead," he said.

Creating obstacles

Responding to concerns that the ordination of women would seriously damage relations with Roman Catholics, the Rev. Jonathan Williams of the Diocese of Monmouth said that there was much more than the ordination of women that served as an obstacle to unity talks. "The Roman Catholic Church must take its share of the blame in creating obstacles," he said.

However, opponents of the legislation warned that the ordination of women would lead to schism. "If the bill passed today, we will produce a situation where parish does not recognize parish," said the Rev. Carl Cooper of Bangor.

Another opponent contended that the Anglican Church did not have the authority to extend the priesthood to women. "There is no Anglican faith or Anglican priesthood, we share these with the whole church," said Peter Edwards from the Diocese of Monmouth. He said that approval of the legislation would mean "we burned our bridge--the via media would be no more."

'More time?'

At the announcement of the vote a loud gasp of despair emanated from the assembly, followed by some crying and then silence. Women deacons sought the solace of each other and their supporters. Nevertheless, there were no demonstrations or outbursts of any kind on the floor.

Following the announcement, Archbishop Alwyn Rice Jones, primate of the Anglican Church in Wales, said that he was "ashamed" of the church in

Wales and expressed hope that the rejection of the bill would not drive out women from the church's ministry. He pledged that the Bench of Bishops would bring the bill back to the Governing Body within 12 months, but the process would likely take another three years before it could be voted on again.

One of the younger female members of the GB spoke of her disappointment and "being tired of the whole thing. Many of my friends are women deacons," said Sue Lloyd, "and those who opposed this bill are simply dyed-in-the-wool traditionalists who feel their jobs would be at risk." She also expressed dismay at the nearly 20 years of waiting. "Jesus was only on the earth 33 years. I am glad he didn't listen to cries of 'Give us more time,' or he would have not completed his ministry," she remarked.

In the meantime, some observers of the Anglican Church in Scotland have suggested that the vote in Wales might influence a vote on the ordination in Scotland later this summer. Although the House of Bishops and House of Clergy are expected to approve the legislation by the required two-thirds margin, the vote in the House of Laity is expected to be very close.

—James Rosenthal is director of the Anglican Communion News Service in London.

94086

Browning condemns attack in Afula, urges Palestinians and Israelis to press for peace

Just back from a 10-day trip through the Middle East, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning urgently pleaded for an end to the escalating violence in Israel and the Occupied Territories, and urged Palestinians and Israelis to press forward in their efforts for peace.

Consistent with his condemnation of the massacre of Muslims in the Hebron Mosque, Browning issued a strong rebuke of the April 6 attack on Israelis at a bus stop in Afula. "I condemn, completely, the fanatical attack on innocent people at a bus stop in Afula...and I am deeply saddened at the pain of the families who lost relatives in this senseless act. Revenge serves no

good purpose," Browning said in an April 8 statement.

"The sooner the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza ends, the sooner Palestinians can move towards sovereignty and Israel towards peace and security," Browning insisted. "The peace process cannot be allowed to fail."

Browning recently traveled on a peace pilgrimage through the Middle East, including stops in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Israel and the West Bank. He met with key leaders in churches and governments in the area, including President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, King Hussein of Jordan, Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin of Israel and patriarchs of all the major Christian churches in the area.

At the end of his trip, Browning joined his counterpart in the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, President-Bishop Samir Kafity, in a statement on peace and justice in the area. The bishops reaffirmed a commitment to "support the creation of a sovereign state for a new Palestine while assuring peace and security for Israel."

94087

Controversial Roman Catholic theologian will become Episcopal priest

The controversial Roman Catholic theologian and noted author, Matthew Fox, has joined the Episcopal Church and will be recognized as an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of California later this year.

Fox, an ordained Roman Catholic Dominican priest for 27 years, was dismissed from his order in March 1993 by the Vatican. His dismissal marked the end of a decade-long struggle with the Vatican over his controversial views. In 1989, the Vatican's Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith imposed a mandatory year of silence against Fox so that he would not take public positions that it contended were opposed to Roman Catholic teaching.

Fox's theology, known as "creation spirituality," calls for a return of spiritual power from institutions to individuals and their communities. Rather than a preoccupation with personal redemption, it emphasizes an active awareness of the cosmic creation story emerging from science, and of the struggle of oppressed peoples for human liberation and ecological justice.

Episcopalians exhibit 'common sense'

Fox said that his decision to join the Episcopal Church was not an easy one, but that he found it necessary. He said that Episcopalians have "common sense when it comes to issues of the ordination of women, birth control, participation of lay people, and keeping bureaucratic structures to a minimum."

"I have had occasion to question Matthew Fox concerning his Christology and can easily see that the foundation of his understanding of Jesus Christ is both orthodox and biblical," said Bishop William Swing of the Diocese of California. "What makes him so controversial is that he attempts to translate the central revelation of Christianity in a vocabulary that is not easily recognized in traditional circles and he attempts to be a conduit for allowing a new generation to come to terms with creation and the primary human need to worship God."

According to Swing, Fox was officially received into the Episcopal Church in January at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. When Fox completes a course of Anglican studies, he is expected to be recognized as an Episcopal priest in December.

Fox said that he will continue to work with English youths on efforts to reinvent forms of worship. "I was deeply moved by what I experienced in an Anglican community in England, where young people are reinventing the language and form for liturgy through rave music and dance, techno art and electronic media," he said. "They are creating the new forms that will inspire a renaissance."

94088

Anglican leaders in Southern Hemisphere call for new mission strategies and self-reliance

Anglican leaders from the Southern Hemisphere have declared that their churches depend too heavily on the "North" and have called for more sharing among churches in the developing world.

"For too long we have been too dependent on funds and other resources from the North to keep our churches going...We wish to commit ourselves to simpler ways of being the church, to learning to live within our means..." the church leaders said at their meeting in Kanuga.

More than 70 representatives of 23 Anglican provinces from 22 nations in Asia, Africa and South America met to develop strategies for mission in their part of the Anglican Communion.

At the end of their meeting, the representatives released a pastoral letter described as "A Trumpet from the South," contending that Christians in the South need to achieve self-reliance, although "without negating the biblical notion of *koinonia*."

Too dependent on the North

"We have noted the continuing effects of colonialist exploitation on some economies, and believe that the economies of the North--and the churches which are part of them--have a responsibility to make some restitution," the statement said. Nevertheless, the leaders expressed anguish over the foreign debt which is crippling the economies of many nations in the South and they appealed "to the churches in the North to sensitize their respective governments to the plight of the South."

They also said that, just as they were once "objects of mission," they now want to offer themselves for mission to the rest of the Anglican Communion. "We in the South believe that God has given us distinctive gifts to offer the communion. Prime among them is our commitment to God's mission, a dynamic commitment forged in our experience of suffering, poverty, pluralism, violence, marginalization, opposition and oppression--but also in our rich cultural diversity.

What does it mean to be Anglican?

In addition to financial concerns and mission strategy, the participants addressed fundamental questions regarding faith and culture in the Southern Hemisphere. "How can we be Anglicans in our various contexts without imitating Anglo-Saxon ways?" they asked.

"In the South we express our Anglican identity in a great variety of ways with varying degrees of attachment to "traditional Anglicanism." While we value our traditions, we have often allowed them to harden into inflexible and unchangeable ideologies...We also recognize that "being Anglican" is not our final goal; rather, it is to work towards greater unity with other Christians for the sake of the reign of God," the participants concluded.



news briefs

94089

ABC news hires religion correspondent

Peggy Wehmeyer, a religion reporter for WFAA-TV in Dallas, was recently named to the newly created position of religion correspondent for ABC World News Tonight. "The role religion plays in today's society needs to be fully explored," said anchor Peter Jennings who had lobbied for the religion correspondent position for two years. "Peggy will examine how faith, religion and spirituality interconnect with government and social policy," Jennings said. The Christian Film and Television Commission consulted with an executive producer at ABC News about the formation of this position, and reports that CNN has also decided to add a religion correspondent.

Canadian Anglicans facing deep budget cuts

The Anglican Church of Canada is coping with significant budget cuts that may require the elimination of several programs and the reorganization of national staff. The General Synod's treasurer told a recent meeting of the church's program committee that the present situation has been caused by lower than expected revenue from the Anglican Appeal and lower diocesan contributions to the apportionment budget. Without drastic cuts, the church faces a deficit of \$1.6 million by the end of 1994 and \$2.6 million by the end of 1995.

Chinese bishop criticizes repressive tactics

The leader of China's official Protestant church, Bishop K.H. Ting, has attacked communist cadres who "exceed their functions" and force the country's unregistered Christians underground through repressive tactics, according to a recent report from News Network International. During a recent speech to government religious leaders in Beijing, the 78-year-old bishop claimed that the gulf between the government-sanctioned Protestant Three Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and the millions of Chinese unregistered Christians was being exacerbated by "cadres who still harbor a

bias toward religion." Ting urged cadres to refrain from the "arbitrary labeling" of unregistered Christians as "illegal," since this was causing dissension in the Chinese church.

Third of Swedish male pastors oppose women's ordination

More than one-third of male pastors in the Church of Sweden do not accept the ordination of women. In the diocese of Gothenburg, eight in 10 oppose the practice, while in the Diocese of Vaexjoe half of the male pastors are opponents of the ordination of women, according to a church publication. The ordained ministry was opened for women in the Church of Sweden 35 years ago. A survey conducted by the University of Uppsala in 1992 showed that one in five deacons were against the ordination of women. One in ten chairpersons of parish councils shared this attitude.

Chilstrom says U.S. Lutheran church should plan for change

Bishop Herbert Chilstrom of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) recently told synodical bishops that change is coming to U.S. church bodies and that the ELCA should plan for it. Chilstrom told the bishops that plans are under way to reduce churchwide expenses in 1994 by \$2 million. Since the formation of the ELCA in 1988, Chilstrom noted, "our income, when measured by the offering plate, has exceeded the Consumer Price Index. We can give thanks for the generosity of our people, but when more and more dollars stay in the local congregation we can only ask what the end result will be for us as a church," he said.

Church leaders call for foreign aid reform

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning recently joined a group of church leaders in a statement urging Congress to move quickly on foreign aid reform. The church leaders called for Congress to overhaul the U.S. foreign aid program and ensure that the program promotes peace and poverty alleviation and protects the environment and human rights. "Our nation has a unique opportunity to make aid a more effective tool to achieve human and national development that will contribute to peace," the letter said. The leaders encouraged Congress not to view aid "as a way to promote a global economic advantage for the United States," but instead use aid to "encourage trade and investment that promotes greater economic equity and environmental integrity."

Sydney Anglicans move towards lay presidency

The Diocese of Sydney in the Anglican Church of Australia recently

became the first Anglican diocese in the world to support legislation allowing lay people and deacons to preside at the Eucharist. A motion requesting the synod's standing committee to bring legislation for lay presidency to its October 1994 session was passed on March 8 with little opposition. The process will move forward in full consultation with the Archbishop of Sydney Harry Goodhew, who, in his presidential address to synod last October, raised several questions about lay presidency and church order. At present only ordained priests and bishops can consecrate the bread and wine at the Eucharist. In 1985 the Diocese of Sydney endorsed the principle of lay presidency. In 1987 it received a report that there were no doctrinal objections or legal impediments to lay presidency.--*Ecumenical Press Service*

Episcopal Life seeks marketing director

Episcopal Life has a position available for a person to refine and implement a existing marketing strategy through the sale of individual, group, parish and diocesan subscription plans of the national newspaper. Marketing experience, preferably in the publishing or not-for-profit sector, is essential. The applicant will work closely with the editor and circulation director. Salary is \$40,000 range. Applications should be mailed or sent by fax (212-867-6174) by May 9, 1994, to John Colon, Executive for Human Resources, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

People

The Rev. David W. Perry was recently appointed staff officer for ecumenical relations by Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning. Perry will succeed the Rev. William Norgren who is retiring. Perry has served since 1987 as executive for the Education, Evangelism and Ministry Development unit of the staff. He will assume his new duties on January 1, 1995. Browning said that "Perry brings to his new assignment both a strong personal belief in the unity of all of God's people and the educational skills and resources to assist the people of the Episcopal Church on the congregational, diocesan and national levels to become actively and creatively engaged in the ecumenical dialogue to which we all, as Christians, are committed." A native of Oregon and a graduate of General Theological Seminary, Perry was ordained in 1966.

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are May 5 and May 19.



news features

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House of Bishops Pastoral Letter on Sin of Racism, March 1994

Preamble

To all the baptized of the Episcopal Church, grace to you and peace in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For decades this church has issued statements, passed resolutions and taken actions which have addressed many aspects of racism and racial justice. While positive changes have occurred at certain times in various situations, racism not only persists in our world, but in many places is powerfully resurgent. The most recent comprehensive attempt to deal with endemic racism in our church and society was initiated by the 70th General Convention in Phoenix three years ago. Among a series of resolutions directed specifically to the church, one required the House of Bishops, in its teaching role, to issue a Pastoral Letter prior to the next General Convention on the sin of racism.

In preparation for this responsibility, we have devoted part of the agenda at each of our interim meetings since Phoenix to this pressing concern. As we have sought to sharpen our personal and corporate consciousness, we have discovered that we ourselves have much to learn, relearn and do. Therefore, what we write here speaks not only to the church at large but to us, your bishops, as well.

This Pastoral Letter is the first in a series of teachings addressed primarily to Episcopalians in the United States. It does not attempt to touch on every aspect of racism, but rather to initiate a continuing discussion on a spiritual malady which infects us all.

In this introductory message, we evoke words and images sacred to our tradition. We share with you an analysis of the current dynamics of racism, confess our complicity with that evil, declare a covenant with each other to work to eliminate racism wherever we find it in church and society, and invite all Episcopalians to join us in a mission of justice, reconciliation and unity.

Analysis

*Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an everflowing stream.
(Amos 5:23—24 NRSV)*

Cries for justice in our land and around the world inevitably confront us with the sin of racism. Those cries have not gone away--not from the far corners of the world, not from the communities in which the Episcopal Church ministers, nor from our beloved church itself. Ethnic cleansing in central Europe, apartheid in South Africa, murder of indigenous people in our hemisphere, ethnic violence in the Middle East, India and other Asian nations are all variations on the theme of racism.

Escalating violence in America illustrates the complexity of racism. At the heart of the matter is fear. We fear those who are different from ourselves, and that fear translates into violence which in turn creates more fear. Institutionalized preference, primarily for white persons, is deeply ingrained in the American way of life in areas such as employment, the availability of insurance and credit ratings, in education, law enforcement, courts of law and the military.

The definition of racism from Webster's Dictionary sharpens the focus for us.

Racism [is the] abuse of power by a racial group that is more powerful than another group and the abuse of that advantage to exclude, demean, damage, control or destroy the less powerful group; a belief that some races are by nature superior to others; racial discrimination based on such belief. Racism confers benefits upon the dominant group that include psychological feelings of superiority, social privilege, economic position, or political power.

The handbook of the Episcopal Church's Commission on Racism gives further definitions:

- **Racism**--the systematic oppression of one race over another. It occurs at the personal and institutional level.
- **Prejudice**--a judgement or opinion about others, made before one has the facts.
- **Discrimination**--any kind of action taken to deprive members of a certain group or a person of their civil rights.¹

The essence of racism is prejudice coupled with power. It is rooted in the sin of pride and exclusivity which assumes "that I and my kind are superior to others and therefore deserve special privileges." In our religious tradition the people of the covenant have frequently expressed this attitude. Often we have been challenged by prophetic witness to turn from a life of privilege to a vocation of responsibility and moral rectitude. Jesus, in his

time, clearly called the people of God to lives of discipleship and servanthood without boundaries of race or class.

Racism perpetuates a basic untruth which claims the superiority of one group of people over others because of the color of their skin, their cultural history, their tribal affiliation, or their ethnic identity. This lie distorts the biblical understanding of God's action in creation, wherein all human beings are made "in the image of God."² It blasphemes the ministry of Christ who died for all people, "so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life."³ It divides people from one another and gives false permission for oppression and exploitation.

While our generation is not the first to experience it, racism has surfaced with particular intensity today because pluralism--the inevitable result of a shrinking world--exists on a scale not known before. The challenge of people with differing backgrounds having to live together has never been greater.

The sin of racism is experienced daily in our society, in our church and its institutions, in the House of Bishops. We have listened to first-hand accounts from brother and sister bishops who, in the face of racial prejudice and discrimination, have struggled to maintain a sense of integrity and personal worth. The church in your community is filled with such stories. They are there to be told and heard.

God's response to human sin is to establish a covenant in Christ Jesus that overcomes division and isolation by binding human beings to God and each other in a new way. For Episcopalians, the implications of this new community in Christ are spelled out in the baptismal covenant.⁴ Our ability to live into that covenant, personally and in our life together in the church, witnesses to the power of Jesus Christ, with whom we have died to sin through baptism and risen to a new life of joyful obedience.

The House of Bishops and the General Convention as a whole have long rejected the evil of racism and have supported full civil rights for people of color among all races. At the same time, a new appreciation has developed for the plight of all oppressed people and the need for equality in the laws of the nation and in the governance of the church.

Various resolutions in the past have proposed ways for victims of discrimination to participate in the prevailing system. Many have challenged the system itself to become more inclusive. The unspoken assumption of these resolutions is that victims will adapt and assimilate into the existing system. Their message, in essence, has been: "You are welcome to become like us."

Such efforts may have represented progress in their time, but they are seen by many today as the product of a dominant racial attitude, which is at the heart of institutional racism.

Racism may be manifest in any race when it is in a position of power and dominance. In the United States our primary experience is one of white privilege, even in places where whites may be a minority in the surrounding population. This comes as a surprise to many white people, because they do not think of themselves as racist. They may even see themselves as victims of various violent reactions against the dominant culture. Yet there are many in our society at all levels who seem to find a certain security in racially restricted communities, schools, clubs, fraternities, sororities and other institutions.

Questions abound. Can the old melting pot image of assimilation, be replaced by a

better metaphor that reflects the value of difference? How can the inherited privilege and unearned advantage of some people be used to bring about the reconciliation of all? How can the church offer all people the "supreme advantage of knowing Christ,"⁵ when too often it is itself a bastion of separation? How can the Episcopal Church, which reflects the dominant culture, be a factor in changing destructive racial attitudes and behaviors? Are we ready to find new common ground on which all may stand together? Will we trust the grace of God to enable us to bridge our many unhappy divisions?

Confession

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord? I will, with God's help.

(The Book of Common Prayer, p. 304)

As baptized Christians and as bishops in the Church of God, we recognize that racism is endemic in every aspect of society, including the church. A poster spotted on a university campus put it this way:

Racism is just about everywhere. It is in our language, customs and beliefs, fears, work, schools and sports. It is virtually everywhere except in those places where people deliberately choose to remove it...on this floor in this hall--on this campus.⁶

One diocese in the church has adroitly adapted this poster for local use by substituting the concluding words with: in this pew in this church--in this community.

We have found the exhortation of an African-American priest of our church to be compelling:

If racism is to be overcome, and our culture attain true inclusivity based on plurality and diversity, there is a great deal of confessing that must go on on all sides: confession that relates to our complicity in the genocide of native peoples, confession by whites of their continued advantage based on unearned privilege, confession by blacks of our co-dependence and participation in that corrupt value system, confession by both blacks and whites of our collusion in the racist dynamic which excludes Asians, Native Americans and Hispanics, confession by all of us of our dependency upon violence as a means of controlling others and settling disputes.⁷

What this observer discerns and diagnoses in a North American context applies, we believe, to every interracial setting, each with its own particular dynamics. Whoever uses power to suppress and demean people of another racial group stands in need of confessing the sin of racism. We recognize that no conscious actions need to be taken to perpetuate this sin. By virtue of its own institutional and systemic character, racism runs on its own momentum. The rooting out of racism requires intentional and deliberate decisions,

prompted and sustained by the grace of God.

The fundamental Christian rhythm of resistance, failure, repentance and returning, well stated in the baptismal covenant, reminds us that all stand in need of honest self-examination and continuing discipline to enable us to become converted and convinced anti-racists. Therefore, we the bishops of the Episcopal Church, confess our complicity with racism and pledge to make necessary changes in our personal lives, in our diocesan structures and in the church as a whole.

Covenant

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace; in our flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.
(Ephesians 2:13-14, NRSV)

In the past, through a variety of resolutions and programmatic offerings, the church has attempted to deal with racism in its own life. Now, we believe, a new moment of choice is upon us. This moment is shaped by a fresh understanding of our baptismal calling, as it is expressed in The Book of Common Prayer. This moment is shaped by the persistent and pervasive racism of our day, an evil that clings so closely that it seems to be part of our very flesh.

Determined to move beyond pious but easy resolutions, we, the bishops of the Episcopal Church, commit ourselves afresh to combat racism in church and society and to hold ourselves accountable to this new covenant.

■ As a personal investment in the task at hand, *each one of us will make an inventory* of racist attitudes in our feelings, habits and actions toward others. We will use this inventory as a basis for transforming our lives through reflection, meditation, prayer and action. Among specific personal commitments we make are the refusal to participate in racially discriminatory clubs, or other institutions, and the refusal to engage in racially denigrating stories and humor.

■ We recognize that *we are part of a body that is itself infected with racism*, which endangers our spiritual health. Those of us who are white acknowledge that our advantaged position inevitably reenforces the racism we seek to dismantle. What gives us hope and courage is our sure knowledge that all people are created in the image of God and that Jesus Christ breaks down every wall that divides, restoring all to unity and wholeness.

■ We believe that the time has come for us in the dominant culture to be still and listen to those on the margins of society. Attending with care may help us realize that people of color must expend endless energy as they contend daily with the consequences of racism. Sensitive listening may help us understand our complicity with a system that discriminates, oppresses and demeans. To that end *we commit ourselves to be better listeners*.

■ Many people, including members of our own church, live in *de facto* segregated communities with increasingly segregated public schools. Many barely subsist in an economy which affords declining opportunities for many people, most especially people of color. We are particularly challenged by the despair of the young in our society, faced with a culture of drugs, sexual abuse and violence. In the face of these realities, *we believe that our mission involves not only changing hearts, but also engaging ourselves in seeking to transform a socio—economic system* that drives many into poverty, alienation and despair. In the regular exercise of the episcopal office and at the time of our pastoral visitations to our congregations, *we will share our experiences of racism and will encourage others to do the same. We will teach and preach the gospel in ways that sustain a vision of justice and peace among all people.*

■ *It is our apostolic and pastoral responsibility to proclaim the vision of God's new creation in which the dignity of every human being is honored.* As we are about that task, we discern an emerging new context for mission. The lingering image of the Episcopal Church as essentially white and Anglo Saxon does not serve us well. We are affected by continuous shifts in the domestic population and by the constant arrival of new waves of immigrants. The church's missionary strategy must take seriously the changing complexion of its broadening constituency.

■ In a church which is increasingly diverse, racially and ethnically, *we will place a high priority on the development of strategies for the recruitment, deployment and support of persons of color*, including Native Americans, Asians, African Americans, Hawaiians and Hispanics at every level congregational, diocesan, national--and their inclusion in decision-making positions throughout.

■ As leaders of the worship of the church, *we will encourage the development of liturgical expressions that reflect the church's racial and ethnic composition and articulate clearly the good news that in Jesus Christ every barrier that separates God's people is broken down.*

■ Finally, in order to be accountable to one another and the church at large, *we will establish a standing committee* of the House of Bishops to implement and monitor the fulfillment of this covenant.

Invitation

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? I will, with God's help.
(*The Book of common Prayer, page 30*)

The catechism declares that the mission of the church "is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."⁸ Through baptism all Christians are called and empowered to participate in a ministry of reconciliation and unity. Central to this mission is the intentional transformation of all structures, systems and practices in the church and

elsewhere that perpetuate the evil of racism.

Racism in the church subverts the promise of new life in Christ for everyone. Racism stains the church and contradicts the reconciling power of Christ's death and resurrection. Racism is totally inconsistent with the Gospel and, therefore, must be confronted and eradicated.

Having entered into covenant with each other to root out the sin of racism in very specific personal and corporate ways, we, the bishops of the Episcopal Church invite all members of our dioceses to join us in this mission of justice, reconciliation and unity. This will be an expression of our commitment to the fundamental covenant each of us entered into at the moment of our baptism.

May God give us the will to engage in this task together and the power and grace to accomplish it.

Notes

1. Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017.
2. Genesis 1:27b.
3. John 3:16b.
4. The Book of Common Prayer, pages 304-035.
5. Philippians 3:8.
6. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.
7. Rodman, Edward W., *True to Our God, True to Our Native Land*, Episcopal Urban Caucus, 1993.
8. The Book of Common Prayer, page 855

94091

Presiding Bishop's statement on Afula killings

I condemn completely, the fanatical attack on innocent people at a bus stop in Afula, Israel. And I am deeply saddened at the pain of the families who lost relatives in this senseless act. Revenge serves no good purpose.

Prime Minister Rabin said to me in a meeting March 31 that the best response to violence is to implement the Declaration of Principles as quickly as possible. I heartily agree.

The sooner the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza ends, the sooner Palestinians can move towards sovereignty and Israel towards peace and security. The course of violence cannot be allowed to succeed. The peace process cannot be allowed to fail.

--The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning
Presiding Bishop and Primate
April 8, 1994

94092

Presiding Bishop's statement on Bishop Steven Plummer of Navajoland

On June 1, 1994, the Rt. Rev. Steven T. Plummer will resume his ministry as Bishop of Navajoland, following a voluntary one-year leave of absence, taken at my request, to evaluate his personal life and ministry. During this period, Bishop Plummer, his spouse and family have participated in a therapeutic treatment program.

As Navajoland is an Area Mission, the House of Bishops and I share oversight responsibilities. At the March meeting of the House, after a full discussion of the circumstances, the House supported my recommendation that Bishop Plummer resume his ministry.

My recommendation is based on a full and complete evaluation of the needs of Navajoland, the wishes of the people there, and of Bishop Plummer's

present circumstances and abilities to carry out this ministry. This evaluation process included a three-day visit to Navajoland along with the Rt. Rev. William Wantland, Bishop of Eau Claire, who has been serving as Interim Bishop of the Navajoland Area Mission during Bishop Plummer's absence. The purpose of my visit was to learn of the life and ministry of the congregations during the past year and to receive comments related to Bishop Plummer's future ministry in the Navajoland Area Mission.

It is my conclusion, following this visit and extensive other consultation, that a decision to return the Rt. Rev. Steven T. Plummer to his position as Bishop of the Navajoland Area Mission is a responsible step and is in the best interest of the church.

I extend my deep thanks to Bishop Wantland and to those who have been so helpful in coming through this difficult time to a creative new beginning. My prayers are with Bishop Plummer, his family, the people of the Navajoland Area Mission.

**--The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning
Presiding Bishop
April 14, 1994**

APPENDIX

Information on press credentials for the 71st General Convention in Indianapolis

Attached is information regarding the application process for press credentials at the Episcopal Church's 71st General Convention in Indianapolis, August 24-September 2, 1994.

Included are:

- Press accreditation guidelines
- An application form for press credentials
- A two-page, proposed schedule for the convention

The final date for pre-approved credentials is July 11th. After that date, application for credentials will be processed on site in Indianapolis.

The Episcopal News Service is not responsible for making arrangements for hotel accommodations for the press in Indianapolis. However, we will forward requests for accommodations through the General Convention Office. Make sure to note your request for accommodations on the application form.

Plans are currently underway to provide a full-service news operation at the convention. We expect that the 10 days will be full ones--exciting and, as usual, hectic.

The Episcopal Church's General Convention is often referred to as "one of the largest legislative bodies in the world." The bicameral legislative body is made up of the House of Bishops--approximately 190 members, and the House of Deputies--860 members (four clerical and four lay representatives from each diocese in the church.)

In order for resolutions to become decisions of the convention--a bill to become a law, if you will--legislative committees must consider and recommend the legislation. Once recommended by a committee, a resolution is sent to the floor of one of the houses, depending on the issue. In order for it to be passed, a resolution must be adopted by both houses. Therefore, like Congress, when a resolution passes one house it may be newsworthy--but it is

potentially only half of the news.

Deputies and bishops will confront many controversial issues challenging the church, including continuing dialogue on sexuality, racism, the environment, finances and restructure, the role of women in the church--and many other issues.

Each morning there will be a regularly scheduled press conversation with briefing officers from both houses to explain "what happened yesterday and what we expect will happen today." And each afternoon, we will reserve time for a "spot" news conference on the most timely subject of the day.

Plans are still developing for several educational forums to be held during three or four evenings at the convention. Noted author Henri Nouwen had accepted an invitation to lead a forum on August 24th. Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund has also accepted an invitation to lead a forum, although the schedule has not been set. Vice-President Albert Gore has been invited to lead a forum on the environment, but will not confirm plans until 30 days prior to the convention.

Stay tuned for further developments regarding the developing plans for the General Convention in further issues of the ENS. Please call us if you have specific questions.

THE EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

Press Accreditation guidelines for the 71st General Convention in Indianapolis, Aug. 24- Sept. 2, 1994

1. Accreditation will be given to news publications and news organizations with priority to official diocesan publications, members of the Religion Newswriters Association, and television and radio news programs.
2. Normally, no more than one person per organization will be accredited for coverage of the convention because of the limited press table space in the two Houses. Additional staff from accredited publication may be required to sit in the visitor's section.
3. To be accredited, an applicant should be a regular member of the staff of the publication.
4. Bishops and deputies are not eligible for press accreditation.
5. Accredited press persons will receive official badges, will have access to General Convention documents, may use working space at the press tables in the two Houses, may be assigned a press box in the press room, may have access to working space in the press room, may attend press briefings/conferences, and may have access to all events open to the press.
6. Application for press accreditation should be made in advance of the convention, but we will also accept applications in Indianapolis.
7. Non-accredited communicators may register as visitors to the convention and will have access to the visitor's sections of both Houses.
8. Requests for press accreditation should be made on the enclosed form.

Application for press credentials
71st General Convention of the Episcopal Church
Aug. 24-Sept.2, 1994
Indianapolis, Indiana

Name _____
 last first

Publication/Station

Your position _____

Address _____
 Street city state zip

Telephone (____) _____ FAX (____) _____

Print media

Circulation: _____

Frequency: _____

Type: news, opinion, advocacy, other _____

Electronic media

Audience: size _____ geographic spread _____

Type: radio, broadcast TV, cable TV, indep. film crew, indep. video crew,
other _____

____ I will make my own arrangements for accomodations.

____ I need information on accomodations for the General Convention.

Please send APPLICATION FOR PRESS CREDENTIALS to: ENS-Press Credentials, 815
Second Avenue--10th floor, New York City, NY 10017.

Proposed Schedule for the 1994 General Convention

Sunday, August 21, 1994

- 3:00pm - 6:00pm Deputy Certification
- 4:00pm - 6:00pm Orientation for House of Deputies' Dispatch of Business

Monday, August 22, 1994

- 9:00am - 12:00pm Orientation & Training for Chairs, Vice Chairs, Secretaries of Committees
- 9:00am - 5:00pm Deputy Certification
- 2:00pm - 3:00pm Volunteer Welcome and Introduction
- 2:00pm - 6:00pm Committee Meetings

Tuesday, August 23, 1994

- 9:00am - 12:00pm Committee Meetings
- 9:00am - 4:00pm Deputy Certification
- 2:00pm - 3:30pm Orientations for all Bishops and Deputies
- 4:00pm - 5:00pm Orientation for Hispanic Deputies and Bishops
- 4:00pm - 6:00pm Committee Hearings
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm Committee Hearings

Wednesday, August 24, 1994 - 1st Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 9:00am Committee Meetings
- 9:15am - 10:30am Opening Eucharist
- 10:45am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 4:15pm Legislative Session
- 4:30pm - 6:00pm Joint Session
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm CONVENTION FORUM

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Thursday, August 25, 1994 - 2nd Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 8:45am Committee Meetings
- 9:00am - 11:00am Bible Sharing, Eucharist and Theological Reflection
- 11:15am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 3:00pm Joint Session: Reports of Presiding Bishop and Executive Council
- 3:15pm - 5:15pm Legislative Session
- 5:15pm - 5:30pm Break
- 5:30pm - 6:15pm Provincial Caucuses to nominate for Presiding Bishop Nominating Committee
- 6:00pm End of time for filing resolutions
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm CONVENTION FORUM

Friday, August 26, 1994 - 3rd Legislative Day - FAST DAY

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 9:00am Committee Meetings
- 9:15am - 10:30am Bible Sharing and Eucharist
- 10:45am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:00pm - 12:30pm House of Deputies Special Order of Business: Program, Budget & Finance
- 2:00pm - 3:45pm Legislative Session
- 2:00pm - 2:30pm House of Bishops Special Order of Business: Program, Budget & Finance
- 4:00pm - 6:00pm Joint Meeting, House of Deputies, House of Bishops and Episcopal Church Women "A Vision of Wholeness: Overcoming Sexism"
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm Committee Open Hearings

Saturday, August 27, 1994 - 4th Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 8:45am Committee Meetings
- 9:00am - 11:00am Bible Sharing, Eucharist and Theological Reflection
- 11:15am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm FREE AFTERNOON

Suggested evening for Seminary Dinners

Sunday, August 28, 1994 - 5th Legislative Day

- 11:00am - 12:30pm Convention Eucharist & United Thank Offering Ingathering
- 1:00pm - 2:00pm Deputy Certification
- 2:00pm - 6:00pm Legislative Session
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm CONVENTION FORUM

Monday, August 29, 1994 - 6th Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 9:00am Committee Meetings
- 9:15am - 10:30am Bible Sharing and Eucharist
- 10:45am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 6:00pm Legislative Session
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm CONVENTION FORUM or Legislative Session

Tuesday, August 30, 1994 - 7th Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 9:00am Committee Meetings
- 9:15am - 10:30am Bible Sharing and Eucharist
- 10:45am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 6:00pm Legislative Session

Suggested evening for Province Dinners

Wednesday, August 31, 1994 - 8th Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 9:00am Committee Meetings
- 9:15am - 10:30am Bible Sharing and Eucharist
- 10:45am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 2:45pm Joint Session: Program, Budget & Finance
- 3:00pm - 5:30pm Legislative Session

End of time allowed for filing committee reports (except on messages or Program, Budget & Finance)

- 7:15pm - 10:00pm INDIANA NIGHT

Thursday, September 1, 1994 - 9th Legislative Day

- 7:30am - 8:45am Deputy Certification
- 7:30am - 9:00am Committee Meetings & Open Hearings for Program, Budget & Finance
- 9:15am - 10:30am Bible Sharing and Eucharist
- 10:45am - 12:45pm Legislative Session

End of time for consideration of report of Program, Budget & Finance

- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 6:00pm Legislative Session
- 8:00pm - 10:00pm Legislative Session

Friday, September 2, 1994 - 10th Legislative Day

- 7:15am - 8:00am Deputy Certification
- 8:00am - 9:15am Closing Worship
- 9:30am - 12:45pm Legislative Session
- 12:45pm - 2:00pm Lunch
- 2:00pm - 6:00pm Legislative Session
- 6:00pm Adjournment sine die

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